

Woodbridge Urban District Council.

Annual Report OF THE Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1973



K.M. HARDING,

M.D., D.P.H., M.F.C.M.,
A.K.C.

Eden Lodge,
Woodbridge.

March, 1974.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the last Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Woodbridge.

It is not a complete record because vital statistics relating to births, deaths and causes of death will not be available until some time after this Council has ceased to exist on 31st March, 1974.

During the short time that I have been Medical Officer of Health for Woodbridge the most outstanding event has been the final abolition of the majority of pail closets and the cessation of the night soil collection. There has been unspectacular, but steady progress in other fields of public health. Housing defects have been remedied, houses improved with the aid of grants, food inspection carried out and food premises kept under surveillance. Investigations have been conducted in connection with the control of notifiable infectious disease, especially food poisoning and dysentery. Inspections have also taken place with regard to the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, and the Factories Act. These activities have contributed to the high standard of health to be found in Woodbridge.

I should like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council and in particular, the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their support and encouragement during my time at Woodbridge.

I am also extremely grateful to the Public Health Inspector, Mr. Snowden, for the loyal and devoted way in which he has carried out his duties, sometimes in very difficult circumstances.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

K.M. HARDING,

Medical Officer of Health.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

Area of District	...	...	1112 acres	Population	...	...	7770
Estimated No of inhabited houses		...	2800	Product of New Penny Rate		...	£8126.

OFFICERS

Medical Officer of Health:

K.M. HARDING, M.D., D.P.H., M.F.C.M.,
A.K.C.

Public Health Inspector:

D.W. SNOWDEN, F.R.S.H.,
M.A.P.H.I., M.R.I.P.H.H.

Infectious Diseases

Notifications Received

<u>Disease</u>	Under <u>1</u>	<u>1</u> to <u>2</u>	<u>3</u> to <u>4</u>	<u>5</u> to <u>9</u>	<u>10</u> to <u>14</u>	<u>15</u> to <u>24</u>	<u>25</u> to <u>44</u>	<u>45</u> to <u>64</u>	<u>65</u> & <u>Over</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Scarlet Fever	-	1	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	7
Measles	-	9	7	23	4	1	1	-	-	45
										<u>52</u>

Monthly Notifications

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jly</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sept</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Scarlet Fever	1	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	7
Measles	2	8	16	4	5	-	-	-	-	2	5	3	45
													<u>52</u>

Vaccinations & Immunisations

	<u>Primary Courses</u>	<u>Boosters</u>
Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis	57	22
Diphtheria/Tetanus	1	92
Tetanus	-	97
Poliomyelitis Salk	-	-
Poliomyelitis Sabin	60	160
Measles	87	-
Rubella	43	-

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION

by the

Public Health Inspector

HOUSING

Statistics for 1973

Estimated number of inhabited houses including 514 Council-owned dwellings at 1st March, 1974.	2800
Average number of persons per house	2.78
Number of houses completed by the Council during the year	Nil
Number of houses built by private enterprise or Housing Associations during the year	20
Total of post-war Council houses completed to 31.12.73	461
Number of House Improvement Grant applications approved in 1973:-	
a) Discretionary (i) Owner-occupied properties - 6)	14
Improvements (ii) Tenanted Properties - 8)	
	22
b) Standard (i) Owner-occupied properties - 5)	8
(ii) Tenanted properties - 3)	

General Inspection

a) Total number of houses inspected during the year for all purposes	101
b) Number found to be unsatisfactory in some respect	55
c) Number occupied in respect of which Demolition or Clearance Orders had been made	Nil

Housing Repairs Instigated

Number of dwelling houses rendered fit as a result of informal action	10
Number of Scheduled (1955) unfit houses rendered fit	6

Clearance Areas

Number of Clearance Orders made	Nil
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Individually Unfit Houses

Number of dwellings in respect of which Demolition Orders were made in 1973	Nil
Number of dwellings demolished as a result of Demolition Orders made previously	Nil
Number of dwellings demolished as a result of formal or informal procedure	2
Number of dwellings in respect of which or part of which Closing Orders were made (Secs. 16 & 18 Housing Act, 1957)	Nil
Number of informal undertakings not to re-let accepted	1
Number of families re-housed from unfit dwellings	3

House Improvement Grants

Details of applications approved during 1973 are given in the statistical section of this Report. However, it may be of interest to note brief details of the twenty-four improvement schemes which were completed and paid for during the year, as follows:-

Discretionary Improvement Grants

Eight owner-occupied and six tenanted dwellings were improved with the aid of this type of grant, which averaged £768.

Standard Grants

Ten dwellings, comprising four owner-occupied and six tenanted premises, were provided with the following total number of amenities:-

- 6 fixed baths or showers in a bathroom
- 9 wash hand basins
- 2 sinks
- 9 hot and cold water supplies at one, two or three points
- 8 internal water closets

The above schemes included two new bathroom additions.

The average grant paid per house was approximately £184.

Qualification Certificates

Eight Certificates were applied for and issued by the Council to landlords of improved dwellings to enable the controlled tenancies to be regulated, leading to a phased rent increase after the registration of a new and fair rent with the Rent Officer. In three instances repair and improvement work was carried out to enable properties to satisfy the qualifying conditions.

Three provisional certificates were also issued during the year, prior to improvement schemes being carried out.

Compulsory Improvement of Dwellings

During the year, one tenant asked the Council to take action to compel his landlords to modernise the property which he occupied and an Immediate Improvement Notice was served under the Housing Act 1964 requiring improvement works to be carried out within twelve months.

Pail Closet Conversions

The number of pail closets abolished or converted to water-borne sanitation during 1973 was 16, which figure includes 6 properties connected to the town's sewerage system for the first time.

By the end of the year the number of occupied properties still served by a pail closet was reduced to three, two of these dwellings being more than 100 feet from a public sewer.

Since the conversion scheme began in 1966 over 300 pail closets have been abolished with or without financial aid.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

No formal action was found necessary during the year in respect of any premises let-in-lodgings or occupied by members of more than one family.

Public Health and Housing Conditions

- (i) Sixty-eight complaints were received from members of the public during 1973 and included such items as choked and defective drainage, accumulations of refuse, offensive smells, leaking eavesgutters and downpipes, dampness, condensation and mould growth, overhanging trees and hedges, the burning of garden or trade refuse, noise from aircraft, road breakers and buildings works, housing defects as well as many notifications of rats, mice, wasps, flies and other insect pests.
- (ii) Nineteen informal notices were served during the year to either abate a nuisance or secure essential repairs. Eleven notices were complied with during the year.
- (iii) Reasonable co-operation was obtained from most landlords and their managing Agents. Legal proceedings were instituted against one owner who failed to provide his tenant with a rent book under the Landlord & Tenant Act.
- (iv) Over 1350 inspections or re-inspections for all purposes were carried out during the year.
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STORAGE OF PETROLEUM SPIRIT

Eighteen premises are licenced to store a total of 61,804 gallons of petroleum spirit in the Urban District. Storage facilities were improved and capacities increased at a number of installations. All new underground tanks were subjected to routine testing during installation.

RODENT CONTROL

Number of Premises treated during:

	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>
a) Dwelling houses	76	51	55	82	79
b) Other premises	15	Nil	2	14	10
Total treatments carried out	289	119	103	149	157

Eradication of Vermin

	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>
a) Premises disinfested	3	2	2	Nil	2
b) Wasp nests destroyed	169	132	77	63	42

WATER SUPPLY

- (i) Nine samples of drinking water from various taps throughout the district were collected for bacteriological examination during the year and all were satisfactory.
- (ii) No dwelling is dependant on a domestic well for its water supply in the Urban District.
- (iii) During the year the Ipswich Corporation Water Undertaking kindly submitted details from thirty-three reports on routine bacteriological water sampling in the district. All were satisfactory.

River Deben Sampling

Twelve samples of water were collected from the River in the vicinity of the Dock, off the river wall and at Kyson Point and examined bacteriologically during the year. The results still indicated the presence of large numbers of bacteria of intestinal origin. It is to be hoped that conditions will improve when Sewerage Scheme Phase III Riverside Drainage is finally carried out and discharges of septic effluent cease in the Dock area.

Model Yacht Pound

During the year three routine checks were made on the quality of the River Water in the pond. No salmonella organisms were isolated from any of the samples.

Deben Swimming Pool

Fifteen samples were examined bacteriologically from the Pool and its footbaths. By the end of the season satisfactorily results were being obtained.

FOOD PREMISES

The number of premises in Woodbridge in which food of one kind or another is sold to the public is 62.

The following gives a breakdown of the type of food premises:-

Bakers, Bakery shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Butchers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Delicatessens	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Departmental Stores	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Fish Merchants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Fish and Chip Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Greengrocers, Fruiterers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Grocers (including small general stores)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Licensed Premises (hotels, public houses, off-licences)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Restaurants, Cafes and Snack Bars	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Supermarkets, Food Halls, Self-Service Stores	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7

Food Inspection

During the year the following items were inspected, found to be unfit for human consumption and condemned, under the 'voluntary surrender' procedure:-

700 lb.	Rice
6 stone	Crabs
7 lb.	Smoked Catfish
12 lb.	Tinned Corned Beef
6 lb.	Tinned Pork
4 lb.	Tinned Bacon
9 lb.	Pork Sausages
968 lb.	Apricots
110 lb.	Groundnuts
352	Frozen food packets weighing 1 cwt. 59 lb.

Total weight = 18 cwt. 55 lb.

A total of fourteen Certificates were issued to the six food businesses who voluntarily surrendered the above food for destruction.

Note:- Though showing an increase the above amount is still very small in comparison with the total quantity of food sold in the district. Warehousing of food is now carried out within the District.

Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1970
Food Hygiene (Markets, Stalls and Deliveries) Regulations, 1966

Forty-one food premises or mobile foodshops received one or more inspections during the year. Informal action was taken wherever items were found to require attention.

No serious contravention was noted and no legal proceedings were instituted during 1973.

Foreign Bodies in Food

Five complaints were received during the year. These included foreign matter in milk, can lining material in a sultana pudding, fly larvae and eggs in bacon rashers and a honey-bee in stoned raisins. In each case the incidents were investigated and steps taken to prevent a recurrence of the complaints.

Sale of Unfit or Unsound Food

Five complaints were received and alleged the sale of food affected by mould growth.

Ice-Cream

The total number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955, for the storage and sale of pre-packed ice-cream was 17, at the end of the year.

Four premises are also registered under this Section for the manufacture of sausages or the preparation of potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

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Type	On Register	Inspection	Defects	Remedied
Factories without power	1	-	-	-
Factories with power	30	15	-	-
TOTALS	31	15	-	-

Outworkers on Register - Two

National Assistance Act 1948

No statutory action under Section 47 of this Act was found necessary during 1973.

OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

ANNUAL REPORT

a) Registrations and General Inspections:

CLASS of Premises	No. of premises newly registered during the year.	Total No. of registered premises at 31.12.73.	No. of registered premises receiving a general inspection during the year.
OFFICES	9	43	12
RETAIL SHOPS	8	69	39
WHOLESALE SHOPS, WAREHOUSES	Nil	3	Nil
CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS OPEN TO PUBLIC	1	10	5
CANTEENS	Nil	Nil	Nil
FUEL STORAGE DEPOTS	Nil	Nil	Nil
TOTALS	18	125	56

Number of visits of all kinds to
registered premises under the Act = 154

Note: "Registered premises" means any premises in respect of which a notice under Section 49 of the Act has been received by the local authority .. and the expression "premises registered" shall be construed accordingly.

"General inspection" means any inspection of premises to which the Act applies which is undertaken for the purposes of ascertaining whether all the relevant provisions of the Act and instruments thereunder are complied with as respects those premises.

b) Analysis by Workplace of Persons Employed in Registered Premises:

CLASS of Workplace	No. of Persons Employed					
	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
OFFICES	289	330	331	320	301	338
RETAIL SHOPS	341	328	325	323	340	342
WHOLESALE SHOPS, WAREHOUSES	22	26	18	23	20	27
CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC	48	70	70	70	72	75
CANTEENS	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
FUEL STORAGE DEPOTS	9	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
TOTAL	709	754	744	736	733	782
TOTAL MALES	314	339	328	324	315	314
" FEMALEES	395	415	416	412	418	468

c) Analysis of Contraventions:

Section	Number of Contraventions Found	
4	Cleanliness	9
5	Overcrowding	4
6	Items relating to heating etc.	17
7	Ventilation	2
8	Natural and artificial lighting	17
9	Items relating to sanitary conveniences	19
10	Items relating to washing facilities	19
11	Drinking water supply	1
12	Accommodation for outdoor clothing etc.	2
15	Eating facilities in shop premises	6
16	Condition of floors, stairs and passages	23
17	Fencing exposed parts of machinery	1
24	Provision of first-aid facilities	21
50	No Abstract of the Act displayed	26
TOTAL		167

d) Reported Accidents

Again a single accident was notified during the year.

This occurred in registered banking premises when a young female cashier broke a bone in her wrist when operating lever controlled coin scales. Following an investigation no further action was taken. At first the extent of the injury was thought to be a sprained wrist but a subsequent X-ray revealed a fracture. The employee was away from work for several months because of the accident. The machine involved was manually operated and is in common use in banks.

CONCLUSION

I wish to thank the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, past and present, for the support you have given me during the past nine years in Woodbridge.

Many changes have taken place during that time. For example, the population has increased by nearly 25 per cent, over six hundred private dwellings and eight-four Council houses have been built. Over three hundred pail closets have been abolished, forty three families have been rehoused from unfit dwellings and thirty-six unfit houses have been demolished. A further two hundred and fifty houses have been improved with the aid of an improvement grant.

Housing conditions, sewerage and sewage disposal methods, water supplies, working conditions in places of employment and food hygiene standards have all improved considerably for Woodbridge and its inhabitants. However, much remains to be done and with the co-operation of all concerned further improvements can be achieved, particularly in the fields of housing and sewerage.

I believe that environmental conditions in Woodbridge compare well with any other area in the New Suffolk Coastal District.

D.W. SNOWDEN,

Public Health Inspector.

5th March, 1974.

